

Message Text

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PAGE 01 OSLO 02552 251148Z
ACTION COME-00

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 AGRE-00 CEA-01 CIAE-00
DODE-00 EB-08 FRB-03 H-01 INR-10 INT-05 L-03
LAB-04 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 CTME-00 AID-05 SS-15
STR-07 ITC-01 TRSE-00 ICA-11 SP-02 SOE-02 OMB-01
DOE-15 OIC-02 /128 W
-----112335 252032Z /20

R 251020Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY OSLO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5879
INFO USMISSION GENEVA

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USMISSION FOR MTN DELEGATION

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ETRD, GATT, ENRG, NO
SUBJECT: BUY-NORWEGIAN PRESSURES IN OFFSHORE DEVELOPMENT

REF: STATE 118158

1. SUMMARY: EMBASSY'S ECONOMIC COUNSELOR AND COMMERICAL ATTACHE CALLED ON TORE BOEGH, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF ECONOMIC DIVISION IN FOREIGN MINISTRY, ON MAY 24 TO MAKE POINTS IN REFTEL. BOEGH ASSURED EMBOFF THAT IT IS NOT GON INTENTION TO DISCRIMINATE AGAINST FOREIGN SUPPLIERS IN OFFSHORE DEVELOPMENT, AND THAT IT IS FULLY AWARE OF ITS INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS AGAINST SUCH PRACTICES AND OF NORWAY'S VULNERABILITY TO SUCH PRACTICES BY OTHER NATIONS. HE DID NOT IMMEDIATELY COMMENT ON REQUEST THAT GON RESCIND REGISTERING AND REPORTING SYSTEM, BUT PROPOSED TO REPLY MORE FULLY TO EMBASSY'S DEMARCHE AFTER FURTHER CONSIDERATION.
END SUMMARY

2. IN INITIAL RESPONSE TO POINTS IN REFTEL AND TO RELATED
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COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS BY EMBOFFS, BOEGH ACKNOWLEDGED THAT GON HAS QUOTE HOPED FOR UNQUOTE GREATER SHARE OF NORTH SEA DEVELOPMENT, AND NOTED THAT NON-NORWEGIAN SUPPLIERS HAD ENJOYED THE LARGER SHARE OF THE SUPPLY BUSINESS UNTIL RECENT PAST. WITH REGISTERING AND REPORTING SYSTEM, HE SAID, GON IS ONLY TRYING TO ESTABLISH APPARATUS TO INSURE THAT OPERATIONS HAVE TAKEN FULL NOTE OF NORWEGIAN CAPABILITIES WHEN MAKING PROCUREMENT DECISIONS.

SUGGESTING THAT SYSTEM COULD GO MUCH FURTHER, HE REFERRED TO BRITISH ESTABLISHMENT OF OFFSHORE SUPPLY OFFICE AND SAID THAT NORWAY WILL CERTAINLY NOT GO THAT FAR.

3. NORWAY IS QUOTE VERY ALERT TO THE INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS UNQUOTE OF THIS MATTER, BOEGH STATED. HOWEVER, GON BELIEVES IT IS ACTING WELL WITHIN ITS INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS, SPECIFICALLY, ITS GATT AND EFTA COMMITMENTS.

4. BOEGH RECOGNIZED THAT THERE HAD BEEN SOME COMMENT BY INDUSTRY AND PRESS INDICATING THAT NORWAY IS ON A PROTECTIONIST COURSE. HE BELIEVED THAT THESE COMMENTS SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY, HOWEVER, BECAUSE PROTECTIONISM IS NOT IN NORWAY'S BEST INTERESTS--NORWAY IS INTERESTED IN SUPPLYING TO OTHER COUNTRIES AND CONSEQUENTLY HAS PRACTICAL INTEREST IN OBSERVING NON-PROTECTIONIST PRACTICES. AS CASE IN POINT, HE MENTIONED NORWAY'S INTEREST IN PROVIDING SUPPLY SHIPS FOR US CONTINENTAL SHELF.

5. COMMENT: BOEGH'S IMPROMPTU REMARKS AND THE MORE CONSIDERED RESPONSE WHICH WE EXPECT FROM MFA MAY NOT BE ENTIRELY CONVINCING IN LIGHT OF STATEMENTS BY ENERGY MINISTER GJERDE AND OTHERS. HOWEVER, WE CANNOT POINT TO CONCRETE EVIDENCE OF DISCRIMINATORY PROCUREMENT DUE TO GON PRESSURE. IT IS COMMONLY BELIEVED BY BUSINESSMENT REPRESENTING US INTERESTS HERE THAT SUCH PRESSURE EXISTS, BUT EMBASSY INQUIRY HAS BROUGHT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TO LIGHT NO SPECIFIC INSTANCES OF BUSINESS LOST AS A RESULT. WE ASSUME MFA WILL REITERATE ITS CONTENTION THAT THE TENDER REPORTING SYSTEM IS NOT DISCRIMINATORY -- ONLY A DEVICE TO ENSURE NORWEGIAN INTERESTS ARE FULLY TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. IF SO, WE BELIEVE BEST COURSE OF ACTION WILL BE TO MONITOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SYSTEM CLOSELY BUT NOT PRESS THE GON FURTHER IN THE ABSENCE OF SPECIFIC EVIDENCE OF DISCRIMINATION.

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Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
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